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Introduction.

Consider all the different color, sizes, and shapes keycaps come in. Now do the same for cables, cases, and boards. How do we find all of these things in one place with them being so scattered throughout the internet? Mechmarket aims to solve that issue.

Safe, secure, simple.

THAT'S WHAT MECHMARKET AIMS TO OFFER

In today's society, people are accustomed to shopping online, especially with the boom of Amazon.

On the flipside, people with niche hobbies are not offered the same shopping experience due to lesser interest from the rest of society.

Mech (market).

- 1 With a niche as specific as mechanical keyboards, it has to be interesting enough for user's not yet into the hobby in hopes they will want to become familiar
- 2 Expensive items need to be sold by certified sellers, especially in a shopping app

Solution.

DESIGNING FOR *BOTH* AUDIENCES

Mechmarket aims to bridge the gap between the two seemingly opposite audiences by creating a visually engaging interface that's simple to use, and a fast and secure checkout experience for the most dedicated hobbyists.



Research.

What's the point of exploring this solution? Which user's interactions are involved? Let's see how common user behaviors and patterns can help to enforce these design concepts.

METHOD.

GOAL DIRECTED DESIGN

In this project, we took a goal-directed design approach that has proven effective in our design efforts. We found qualitative research activities to be the most useful, consisting of a kickoff meeting, literature review, competitive audits, stakeholder interviews, SME interviews, and persona hypothesis construction.



***Discover your
end-game.***

Kickoff.

INITIAL KEY QUESTIONS

- What's the product?
- Who will use it?
- What do our users need most?
- Which users are most important to the business?
- What challenges do we face moving forward?
- Who do we see as our biggest competitors?
- What internal and external literature should we view to familiarize ourselves with the product and technical domain?

Afterwards.

Moving forward, we were able to understand stakeholder's thoughts on the product, our users, and design problems to formulate how to construct stakeholder interviews later on.

Literature.

PERTAINING TO PRODUCT AND DOMAIN

Brand Strategies

First Impression - User will judge the book by it's cover. Construct a well designed outward appearance. Mobile apps benefit from this, as the additional splash screen before the homepage can instantly tell users what the app is about and convince them why the should engage.

Keep it Simple - Simplicity generally equates to user friendliness and an applicable and unforgettable design.

Product Marketing Plans

Soft Launch - to identify bugs, needed improvements & gain user feedback early on in a smaller market. Judge marketing acceptance and prepare for hard launch

App Store Optimization - to be found when users search for similar applications. Utilize keywords, titles, and descriptions.

Social Media Engagement Encourage users to share on their own social accounts to promote and increase downloads.

Unique Mobile Offering - features or services that no other app has or does to gain/grow user base

Industry.

KEYBOARD STATISTICS

Growing market - Mechanical keyboards garnered more than 650 mil. USD globally in 2017 with the US making up 38% of the revenue alone.

Cost Effective - Individual parts on a keyboard can be replaced when broken or when customizing, so the hobby is not difficult to engage in even for users with low funds.

Global Mechanical Keyboard Market Share



Competition.

COMPETITIVE AUDIT

Massdrop, Clackkeys, Etsy - individual custom keys

Reddit - exclusive keys & parts

Mechmarket has the opportunity to capitalize on this and sell all of those products without oversaturating the user's selection

HOW ARE THEY COMPETING?

Constraints - each separate entities; one sells something, the other doesn't, causing the user to move from platform to platform in search of what they need

Seamless Interface - Apps like GOAT manage to captivate it's niche audience with endless scrolling and a linear checkout process, making it easy for users to browse and purchase products

Stakeholders.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW

Preliminary Product Vision - Create an all inclusive, fast and safe market for any and all mechanical keyboard enthusiasts who want to purchase and sell parts and products.

Budget & Schedule - This isn't a project with a gigantic scope, but it would still require several engineers for production and one or two to stay on board afterwards to aid the up-keep of app after launch.

Technical Constraints & Opportunities - There aren't any major technical constraints, but there's more work on Mechmarket's end to ensure that each product sold is legitimate and of promised quality.

Business Drivers - Create a steady revenue stream via user sales and purchases; ensure the user feels secure and satisfied when buying to have them return again; draw in manufacturers and outside sellers to buy into selling on Mechmarket's platform.

Stakeholder Perception - It is important to understand that the majority of the keyboard enthusiast community (the app's primary audience) will be wary of business tricks and rip-offs and won't hesitate to turn towards the internet to complain and spread bad publicity. As long as Mechmarket treats them with respect and has a solid product, there won't be a problem.

Subject Matter Expert.

SME INTERVIEW

Q: What are some important things you look for when buying a certain keyboard part? (Certified Seller, etc.)

A: Certified sellers, as well as user reviews if any. Also product specifications to ensure I'm getting not only the right part but also a quality part.

Q: From your experience, what do you think is a common misconception people new to the hobby have?

A: Most people think that all keyboards are built the same and have trouble differentiating the different types of keyboards. Also newcomers to the hobby tend to think "gaming" keyboards from popular brands are superior to all else which is false.

Q: Is there anything in particular you think should be avoided in an app like this?

A: Over saturation in the marketplace and proposed kickstarter features. A smaller curated marketplace with quality parts and keyboards would be much better than an oversaturated market with knock-off or cheap parts.

Q: What do you think is a common way to get people unfamiliar with the hobby more into it?

A: Showing them different types of keyboards. There are a lot in terms of aesthetics, and customizing the colors, lights, keycaps, etc. is appealing to most.

Q: Is there anything in particular you'd like to see in an app like this?

A: I'd love a feature where users can start group buys for hard to find keycap sets or a kickstarter-esque service where artists/keycap makers can propose unique artisan keycaps or sets and users can decide whether to back the project or not.

Persona.

PRIMARY PERSONA

Name - Jake

Age - 23

Occupation - Tech Support

Goals - Personalization; sense of identity

Life Goal - Become a SWE and raise a family

Expertise - Computer software & hardware

Illustrative Quote - "How is it any different than spending \$100 on shoes?"

Narrative - Jake loves when customers or others ask about his keyboard because he gets to share with them everything about his unique build. Mechmarket allows him to express his creativity through the app with other keyboard enthusiasts as well as find cool parts and good deals for his build.



Persona.

SECONDARY PERSONA

Name - Blair

Age - 20

Occupation - University Student

Goals - Customizing her personal possessions

Life Goal - Graduate university and start her career

Expertise - UI Design

Illustrative Quote - "Function, then beauty"

Narrative - Blair is a university student who enjoys solving complex problems through design. She's a quirky and individualistic person, spending most of her time creating digital interactions in a digital environment. Looking around her room, she wants her workstation to reflect her design values, providing a unique design and functionality that won't prohibit her work.



Persona.

SUPPLEMENTARY PERSONA

Name - Wayne

Age - 27

Occupation - Architect

Goals - Keep his family happy

Life Goal - Work in a management position or higher up

Expertise - Drawing & Reading

Illustrative Quote - "A clear desk is a clear mind!"

Narrative - When Wayne isn't at work, he is first and foremost a family man. He loves keeping his children and spouse happy, and loves to spend time with them. Furthermore, he loves to purchase gifts for his kids when he can afford to. He needs an easy way to purchase a keyboard part that his song has been wanting for a long time without getting lost during the buy/checkout process.



Definition.

REQUIREMENTS DEFINITION PROCESS

Problem & Vision Statement

Problem - The market has little to no providers with a trustworthy buying experience when purchasing keycaps or other unique items.

Vision - The design of Mechmarket will help users customize their keyboards with great ease and satisfaction. This will dramatically feed off the niche for mechanical keyboards and lead to increased revenue.

User Personas

Primary Persona - a young male in his 20's with an interest in technology. His physical characteristics were chosen based on what the largest demographic for mechanical keyboards in the United States are with an age range of 10 -33

Secondary Persona - Used similar parameters to the primary persona, but made sure her needs for the product were different.

Scenario.

CONTEXT SCENARIO

While Jake loves his job, working for a large tech company sometimes makes him feel like just a number. After troubleshooting a hardware issue, Jake absently notes how bland the keyboard's appearance and key stroke are. He asks his supervisor if a mechanical keyboard would be alright to use in which they responded, "As long as it does not interrupt anyone else's work."

Jake brings a mechanical keyboard in the next day for use and asks his coworkers if the sound bothers them. At his job they are separated by cubicles. His coworkers tell him they can't hear much and give Jake the greenlight to use his mechanical keyboard.

During his lunch break, Jake wastes no time in searching for keyboard customizations on his phone. He finds Mechmarket, downloads the application and stumbles upon a custom key that really piques his interest where he then places an order for it.

A week passes, and Jake receives his custom keycap in the mail. He takes it in with him to work one day and adds it to his keyboard. He relishes in the difference between his coworkers work stations and the personality it adds to his own station.

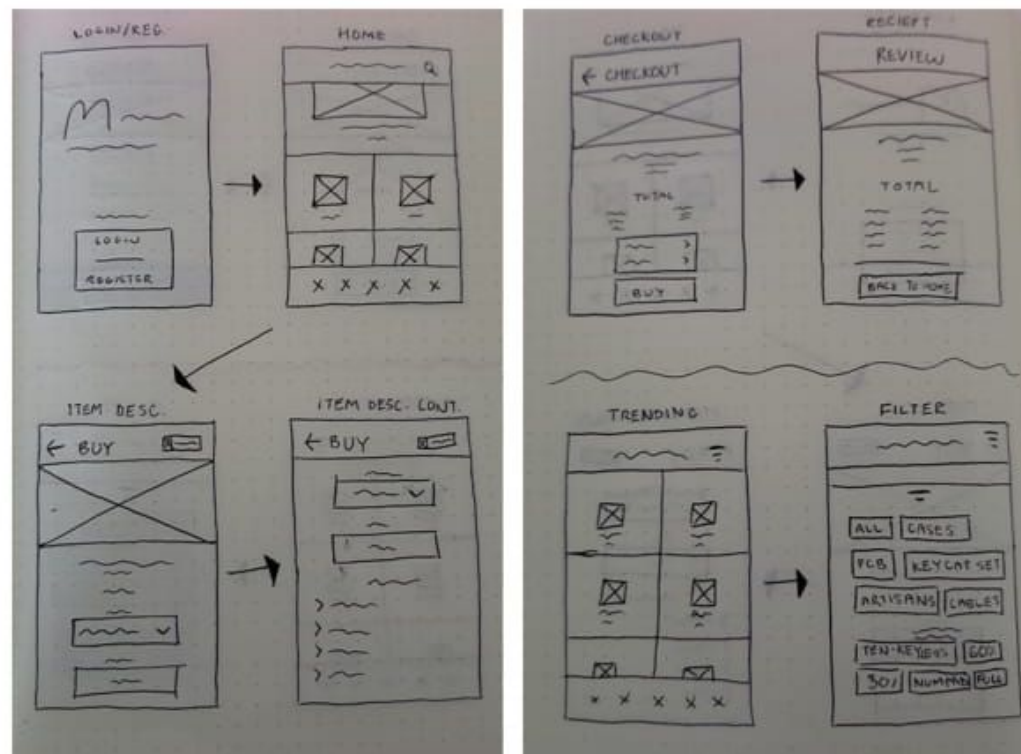
Design.

Solving complex problems with intuitive interface solutions.

Key Path Scenario.

PURCHASING AN ITEM

- 1 Jake launches the Mechmarket application by tapping the designated icon on his phone.
- 2 Jake then selects the 'login' button from the splash screen to log into his existing account.
- 3 Jake types in a desired username and password to the designated fields then clicks 'login' below.
- 4 The home screen launches and Jake scrolls through the product selection.
- 5 He selects an item, chooses a (drop down) and enters quantity desired, then taps 'buy now'.
- 6 Jake inputs his credit card information and billing address in the designated fields then taps 'done'.
- 7 Jake types the shipping address then taps 'done'.
- 8 Jake reviews his checkout then confirms his order.



Key Path Scenario.

PURCHASING AN ITEM

